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TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY
BULLETIN

W. C. ROGERS, EDITOR

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THE FOLK MUSIC MOVEMENT

BY

Charles F. Bryan, Associate Professor of Music
Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee

The history of the folk music movement in America makes a strange story. Things are happening today which we never dreamed would occur some twenty years ago when it became entirely respectable to talk about our American folk heritage, and when a few enthusiasts set out to acquaint our country with its rich folk background.

In the 1920's and the 30's we began to expand our pitifully small store of books, articles, arrangements and general knowledge on American folk music. Exciting new words, classifying the types of our folk music were introduced. People began to read of "moonshiner songs," "logrolling ditties," "minstrel melodies," "Appalachian ballads" and many other terms purely American in flavor. For the first time brief histories of American folk music were being written and accepted by the student of music.

By the end of the 30's these histories indicated a very general agreement as to the development of folk music in our country. If we should pull together the views of these brief historians the digest would read something like this:

No longer can we say we have no folk music of our own. When the first settlers came to this country they brought along with them traditions and customs of their old homes. They found here Indian tribes which had the usual elemental music attributes found in any savage tribe. They were not influenced by this primitive music. A major portion of these people coming from the British Isles sang the beautiful ballads and folk songs in the English language tradition. Scattering all over this vast country, these our progenitors, became accustomed to the new tasks, hardships, climate, economic and social ways which the New world presented. Each hill or hollow, region or river incubated its own folk music peculiar to its own environment.

But we were not to recognize the fact that we had developed a rich folk heritage for some time. Early writers were saying that the New world was too young and too heterogeneous to have developed any national folk culture. The homesick Bohemian, Dvorak, wrote The New World Symphony which emphasized the fact that there was a distinctive folk music in the Negro spiritual. Our earlier

composers utilized, as thematic material in their works, Indian and Negro folk music, but never dreamed that there existed a vast wealth of folk music just as unique and in many cases much more indigenous to our total population.

Very quietly, through the work of such scholars as Child, Sharp, Jackson, Sandburg and others, collections of new, exciting materials began to appear and a rich mine of hidden folk treasures was opened to public view.

The foregoing historical digest, which is in substance an accurate and fair record of our development, shows the enthusiasm of those who in the 30's began to expound the new "cause." Master's theses, dissertations, research projects started by the Library of Congress or the smallest college began to send "tune hunters" into every secluded spot where folk music was still extant. Students, as well as musicologists, were beating paths into the hills and hollows in the effort to preserve our Americana.

While all this was going on the general concert-going audiences were not yet initiated to the newly discovered music. When any one mentioned American folk music he still thought of the Negro spiritual or Indian themes and listened to the works of McDowell and other American composers attempting to utilize this material.

Almost over night, during the first part of this decade, audiences all over the country began to hear arrangements of American folk music. Concert singers introduced with every concert new arrangements of songs from all parts of the country. Symphony orchestras played hoodowns, ballad suites and other newly written works based upon the new materials brought to light by the collector. Requests of sophisticated audiences for "Old Joe Clark," "Jayfaring Stranger," "Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair" became more numerous. There entered into the concert artist field folk singers who would devote an entire evening to American folk music. John Jacob Miles, Burl Ives, Tom Scott and others gained thousands of enthusiastic listeners. Musical shows based on folk themes appeared and flourished.

"Oklahoma," "Carrousel," "Dark of the Moon" and other stage productions caught the folk spirit and rode the crest which is still mounting.

This increasing wave of interest and popularity for American folk music, we have shown first appeared in the small circle of research enthusiasts and spread to the larger concert audiences. This group of concert-goers, by virtue of training or urban advantages, we shall call Music Sophisticates as contrasted with the much larger group of people who do not take their music seriously. While the Sophisticates were enthusiastically applauding the concertized Americana, the vast numbers of less formal people, who had long nurtured the same folk material in its crude state, were leaving in inverse ratio this music for a new type of bucolic entertainment.

During the 30's radio had at last penetrated the hills and hollows of our nation. By oil lamps, battery radios poured out a constant stream of entertainment. Not ready for the concert hall type of music nor the dance hall jazz so predominant on the radio, the "folk" took the nearest thing to their tastes, the barn dance type of program. These programs began very early in radio in Chicago and Nashville and a few other places but reached international fame during the last war.

The standard pattern of the early barn dance program was the same. Individuals and ensembles, gifted in folk performance, gave intermittent groups of selections which all together made up a full Saturday night of fiddling, ballading, and general rustic fun. At first the music was that of the "folk," genuine, unrehearsed and spontaneous. Fiddlers would break into hoedowns, handed down from their forefathers, as the spirit moved them, and amidst foot patting and set calling audiences would increase with each Saturday night.

The performers followed other occupations during the week and relaxed every weekend over the air.

As time went by there began to enter the weekly programs a new type of music neither folk nor art. Songs, written during the week, were presented each Saturday night as "new" folk songs. With each week this pseudo folk music increased as that of the genuine folk decreased. A new type of "artist" appeared on the scene. Dressed in western hat and boots or flannel shirt he could now make this life a profession, travelling during the week for one night programs and increasing with each appearance the Saturday night listening appeal.

The new pseudo folk music, which still is increasing with each program today, is an interesting combination of folk style with the Tin-pan Alley writing of the early 20's. Texts based on broken or mended romances are set to tunes in major keys and based on harmonies of marked similarity. The folk element is brought out by the type of singing and some of the instruments. The folky fiddle remains but the crying steel guitar emphasizes the pseudo state of development.

That the folk have turned from the genuine to the pseudo in rapid degrees can not be denied. One has only to talk to radio managers to realize that 90% of the requests are for the "new" folk.

It is not our wish to condemn or deplore the situation. The history of music has always been a history of tastes. When 20 million people are attracted to a type of music, it is well that we know what is going on; and while we as folk lovers wish to see our genuine folk music used and enjoyed, we can do nothing but observe the trend and hope for a better day.

What we thought would never happen has come to pass. The large group of music sophisticates, who once looked askance at our folk

heritage, are now going to it with great enthusiasm, while, on the other hand, the "folk" are leaving that which they have so long nurtured and enjoyed for a sort of pseudo, hybrid form of folk music.

How far will this trend go? What will evolve as the two groups move further apart? It is difficult to give answers to these questions. With a careful study of all the forces involved, perhaps one can see a slackening of the pace of the two opposing trends. Since the Sophisticates are those who write the school text books and prepare the reading materials on our folk heritage, the trend may well turn to the genuine folk. The enthusiasm of the Sophisticates who write, arrange, and concertize will have great influence on the "folk" and will help them re-discover that which for centuries was theirs alone. Perhaps, most of all, the real folk music will return because there is no substitute for the genuine. The pseudo may sparkle, but the genuine satisfies.

USAGE IN THE SOUTHERN BALLAD AND FOLK SONG

George W. Boswell
George Peabody College.

I Introduction

This study resulted from an investigation of the level of language usage characteristic of the poetry in Southern folk songs. For that purpose three of the leading collections were examined word by word: namely, Cox' of West Virginia,¹ Sharp's of the ballads in the North Carolina-Tennessee area,² and Miss Scarborough's from the Appalachians in North Carolina and Virginia.³ As the textual reading was pursued, notations were made of the most interesting departures from the grammatical area customarily defined as "standard usage." But before forming mental condemnation of such expressions let us pay serious heed to Pooley:⁴

The common attitude toward English usage and correctness is that some forms of English are "right" and some forms are "wrong." ...Actually any English is "right" which enables the speaker or writer to communicate clearly, efficiently, and accurately what he wants to say.

With approximately 250 examples of non-standard usage incidence collected it was possible to combine, classify, select, and present them in some comprehensible order. The arrangement chosen is, for the

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1. John Harrington Cox, Folk-Songs of the South (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925).
 2. Cecil J. Sharp, English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), Vol. I.
 3. Dorothy Scarborough, A Song Catcher in Southern Mountains (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937).
 4. Robert C. Pooley, Teaching English Usage (New-York: Appleton-Century, 1946), p. 27. *Italics mine.*

first seven divisions, by parts of speech; then follow locutions under the several headings of agreement, pronunciation, and localisms. This is admittedly an arbitrary organization that leaves much to be desired. For example, little discussions can in restricted space be entered into concerning the relative prevalence of the various examples, and no separation is made between examples from ballads and songs, or pieces of imported English or native American origin.

For the convenience of a reader especially interested in any single illustration cited herein, at least a statement may be given concerning what type of song or ballad appears between specified pages of the three collections. Each illustration is documented by volume and page number. Cox prints English (Child) ballads from page 1 to 173; American or other English ballads from 174 to 391; and native songs from 392 to 515. Sharp's Volume I contains only ballads -- Child to page 307 and American or other English thereafter. Miss Scarborough prints ballads (mixed, but mostly Child) between pages 83 and 255, and songs elsewhere in her book.

II. Examples of Usage

A. Verb Forms

Since more departures from textbook grammar occur in verb usage than in any other, a start will be made with verb forms.

1. Confusion of past tense and past participle

a. Use of the raw past participle for the simple past tense ⁵

Cox⁶ 39: She taken him through her father's hall.

Cox 94: And ten of them he run.

Cox 111: He swum and he swum and he swu-u-n-um.

Cox 219: Maggie...stood and seen him fall.

5. This is among the most widespread and fascinating of Southern verb usages.

6. Folk-Songs of the South (see footnote 1).

7. In a song in which every stanza contains this form at least once.

Cox 375: The next one he come to, he done just the same.
 Sha⁸177: I slain a naked man.
 Sha 235: And he overtaken of his lady, .0.
 Cox 165: Says he, "Old lady we've eat it all."⁹

- b. This last example, which could be interpreted either way, leads us to the reverse situation in which a past tense is used in place of a perfect:

Sha 97: Saying, "A many an errand have I went."
 Cox 98: And shun the fault I've fell in.

2. Other exchanged forms¹⁰

- a. Present tense with auxiliary used for the past participle

Sha 36: This bloody clothing that I have wear.
 Cox 384: For friends and relations have give their consent.

- b. Preterite used for the past participle

Cox 396: It like to broke my heart.

- c. Past participle used for the infinitive

Cox 154: Where my own ought to been (be)?¹¹

- d. Third person used for the second person (imperative)¹²

Cox 50: Go bringeth the brown girl home.

- e. Past tense of two different verbs confused

Sha 239: Last night she lied on a soft feather bed.
 Cox 342: ...she wrang her hands and cried.

3. Obsolete forms¹³

Seb¹⁴368: I dreamed I pled and cried.
 Sha 18: He help her on his milk-white steed.
 Sha 167: And hangen you shall be.¹⁵
 Cox 73: For I drempt that my household.¹⁶

8. Collection referenced in footnote 2.

9. Some British still use this pronunciation, which was formerly standard.

10. In this category are listed recognized verb forms (apart from the above) that are only syntactically non-standard.

11. This example is obviously in order to rhyme.

12. On the other hand, this is quite possibly a survival of the Old England imperative form bringas.

13. These forms once in the best repute in English, help to substantiate claims of Southern speech to the "undefiled well."

4. Confusion of weak and strong verbs in the past tense

a. Simple mistaking of strong for weak verbs

Cox 73: Down she threwed her ivory comb.

Cox 517: You have eat my meat and drinked my ale.

b. Simple mistaking of weak for strong verbs

Cox 105: They grew and clumb to the steeple top.

Cox 500: I never was squz so.

c. Combination of strong and weak forms

Sha 7: Six pretty fair maids I've drowneded here.

Sha 105: One takened him by his long, yellow hair.

Sha 161: I slewed a naked man.

5. Coined verbs¹⁷

Cox 73: And tingered low at the ring (rang the doorbell).

Cox 279: Where the turtle dove may harkle.

6. The subjunctive mood

a. Indicative for subjunctive

Sha 9: I wish'd you was in the sea.

Cox 97: If death is printed on his face.

b. Subjunctive for indicative

Cox 97: If on your death bed you do lie,

What need the tale you're telling?

Sha 196: And when she heard that George were dead.¹⁸

7. Verbs out of nouns¹⁹

Cox 46: And he knuckled at the ring.

Cox 48: O mother, O mother, come riddle us all.

8. Solocistic verb usage²⁰

a. Sit-set.

Sha 166: And he sat her upon his knee.

Cox 356: She called for a chair to set upon.

14. A Song Catcher in Southern Mountains (see footnote 3).

15. In Anglo-Saxon days this was the past participle of the verb hang.

16. Drompt is still the British past tense form.

17. Doubtless this list could be greatly extended.

18. Though the reason is unknown, this is very common in dialect and song.

19. Redimpted is an excellent example from Cox' preface.

20. Examples of these, especially the lie-lay, abound.

b. Lie-lay.

Cox 93: Down to her last long sleep she laid.

Cox 106: ...lie him down, lie him down, I say.

c. Raise.

Cox 86: O quickly quickly raise him up.

d. Learn.

Sha 86: A-learning your hounds to run.²¹

B. Nouns,²² exotic forms.

Sha 18: He saw her own dear seven brothers~~en~~.

Sha 70: You put my bible at my head,
My solberd (psalter) at my feet.

Cox 59: And before I charge you with my bless-on.

Cox 147: I'm neither weeping for my gold,
Nor for my richory.

C. Pronouns.

1. Pleonasm

Cox 5: Get you down, my pretty parrot.

Cox 136: Georgie he was hung in a white silk robe.

2. Case

a. Nominative for objective

Seb 281: Some young man may fool you
Just like one fooled I (for rhyme).

Cox 150: To maintain his two brothers and he (not for rhyme).

b. Objective for nominative

Sha 328: It was me, poor Polly Bam.

Cox 210: Them and I together shall meet.

3. Solecistic Use

Cox 74: And from hisn there grew a brier.

Cox 101: He got hisself a waiting boy.²³

D. Adjectives

1. Pronoun for adjective

Cox 264: And sing to her them good old songs.

21. It is interesting to note that Anglo-Saxon læran meant to teach.

22. Little classification of these substantives seems practicable.

23. Self was once considered simply as a noun.

2. Unusual form or use

Sha 67: And give him a deathless²⁴ wound.
 Sha 111: Go home, go home, you mourny little girl.
 Scb 266: She fell into him arms so lovely.²⁵

3. Miscellaneous

a. "Nary"²⁶

Sha 106: There is nary nother pretty girl in old Scotland.
 C a 179: No narey word to speak,
 Nor narey horn to blow.
 Scb 41: Sence I spoke ary word with thee.

b. "Yonders"

Sha 1: Go tell her to hang it on yonders thorn.
 Sha 48: When the sun sets into yanders sycamore tree.
 Sha 108: I'd shoot yon yonders pretty little bird.
 Sha 134: Lady Margaret were buried in yons churchyard.

E. Adverbs

Cox 11: Mount off, mount off, my pretty Polly.
 Cox 275: The snow was fastly falling.
 Cox 276: And many a battle he fought brave.
 Cox 392: ...so kind-like²⁷ she answered him.
 Sha 23: Till they ran more clearer than wine.
 Sha 340: Yander comes the captain...

F. Prepositions

1. Added and omitted

Sha 6: For you are too bad a rebel
 For a naked woman to see (to see a naked woman).
 Cox 26: Up sister's, up (at) sister's; make my bed soon.

2. Substituted

Cox 73: But tomorrow, agin²⁸ eight o'clock.
 Sha 298: O no, I won't, Sarah, enduring (during) your breath

G. Conjunctions

Scb 41: Sence I've heard you're engaged with another fair
 maid,
 Nor your heart's no longer mine.

24. Deadly.

25. Loving.

26. This familiar adjective is supposed to have derived from the phrase "not ever a" or "never a", or possibly even "not any".

27. Of course, "-like" is from the Anglo-Saxon adverbial ending that became the current "-ly".

28. Against, at.

Cox 37: "Is this Lord Bateman's hall?" she said,
Or is he here himself within?"
Cox 49: Ever when was it three lover did meet?²⁹
Cox 132: He made such a sound to³⁰ the greenwoods roared.

H. Agreement

1. Subject-prodicato

Cox 44: For it haven't been long ...
Cox 105: An' I's gwine die of sorrow.
Sha 86: It's both their hearts is full of glee
Sha 90: They was apples and cherries plenty.

2. Pronominal

Cox 108: O hand me down those corpse of clay.
Cox 376: For a soldier they are brave...

I. Pronunciation

1. Broadening of the short a

Sha 166: He jobbed the pistol in her breast.
Sha 370: He wropt a great coat round her.
Cox 105: Go dig it long and norrow.³¹
Cox 282: I cotch (catch, caught) the roomatism.

2. Flattening the broad a

Seb 266: You air my heart's delight.
How fair have you to travel?
Seb 307: Madam, I think you're a sassy jade.

3. Confusion of oi and i³²

Seb 74: To see that wheel a-gwine.
Cox 344: And a cup of cold pizen.
Cox 498: I skinned him, I washed him, I put him on to boil;
I thought, by golly, I could smell him half a
moile.³³

4. Miscellaneous vowel changes

Seb 274: For I getting tord of the Rain and the Snow.

-
29. An example of the inversion that makes "woodpecker" into "pecker-wood", etc.
30. Till, that.
31. To rhyme with tomorrow.
32. In the eighteenth century these vowel sounds were both pronounced like long i.
33. One can conjecture that this couplet was altered second-hand for reasons of whimsy from the original serious long-"i" rhyme.

Seb 361: Gnawing for the like (lack) of food.
 Cox 7: And strove to weary off (worry of) me.
 Cox 59: And set her down in a golden cheer.
 Cox 60: You mought 'a' had me...
 Cox 105: Tell (till) they could not grow any higher.

5. Consonant changes

Sha 280: With an old powter pot she mellered his head.
 Cox 43:my own heart's blood
 Come trinkling o'er my knee.
 Cox 104: He cou'ted her sox mont's or mo'.
 Cox 382: William Taylor and his own true lovyer.

J. Localisms

Cox 44: She would (wished to thrust) it in fully.³⁴
 Cox 101: For to fetch him Barby Ellen.
 Cox 285: Fur I 'low (intend) to desert.
 Sha 280: Like an old pedlar went wagging his pack.

III Conclusions

A few generalizations on Southern folksong diction should be possible here.

1. The language of the Southern folksongs, like that of the people who have perpetuated them, contains any number of violations of grammar textbook rules.
2. Diction and usage herein, like the people's everyday speech, are reminiscent of an earlier day in England. Many forms from Old and Middle English, almost unknown now in Great Britain, are preserved in our upland song texts.
3. With respect to usage level there is little appreciable difference between the language of song and ballad, or between pieces of American or English provenience.
4. This language is too flexible and unconstrained, too sensitive to considerations of poetic shading, tone, and connotation, to imprison itself within narrow rules of case, agreement, and the like. Notwithstanding its lack of harmony with formal grammar, its usage

34. This harks back to an Elizabethan usage.

is in a real sense "good."

5. There is no sophisticated hesitancy in employing the conventional phrase, of which germane examples are the Homeric epithet and the Beowulfian kenning.

6. No willingness to distort the story (in ballads) for reasons of meter or rhyme is in evidence. However, when convenient, concessions to both (for example, adding a double subject or changing "me" to "I" at the end of a line) are made.

7. The several insupportable rules of modern grammar (providing split infinitive, double negative, etc.) are consistently ignored.

8. Both grammar and pronunciation are functional in the broadest sense. Not rule-bound, they measure up to the occasion and the purpose for which they are being employed. Much might be made of the contention that conventionality in a language militates against its poetry.

YOUR NAME, PLEASE

Homer N. Williams
Department of Commerce
Tennessee Wesleyan College

If your name is Barker, you may or may not know anyone named Tanner. Yet these two names have a common origin. Many years ago, the man who removed the bark from oak trees and prepared it for use in tanning skins for leather was called a barker. The individual who used this bark in the actual tanning process was known as a tanner. Hence, in the course of time, John the barker became John Barker, and William the tanner became William Tanner.

The Fletchers may have never heard of the Arrowsmiths. Mr. Fletcher may be a salesman, while Mr. Arrowsmith may follow the occupation of telephone lineman. But, somewhere back in early times, the fletchers and the arrowsmiths were fellow workmen. The verb to fletch meant to fit an arrow with a feather, and in time the designation "fletcher" was applied to the workman who made the arrow and shaped the flint. Somewhat later, perhaps, in the development of this type of weapon, the arrowsmith made the iron part of the implement.

These are some examples of the surnames that have been developed from the kind of work performed by an individual. They are commonly called occupative names, and their number is very large indeed.

First to be considered are those derived from official titles. Many of these originated in courts of law. The person who executed a summons to appear in court was known as a summoner. Thus, Robert the summoner became known as Robert Summoner, and later, Robert Sumner. A man who served as bailiff was ultimately given the surname of Bailey. The word "clerk," the records tell us, was formerly pronounced as if it were spelled "clark." Thus

we have the name Clark today. Other names in this group are Beadle, Chancellor, and Fawcett. This last one originally meant judge.

Holders of public office have given us such names as Alerman and Mayor. Parker is from park-keeper, and Latimer means interpreter. Forrester is self-explanatory. Reeve is derived from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning the chief magistrate of a town or district. Marshall is a name ordinarily considered in this group, although it also has its origin ⁱⁿ a French military title, "le mareschal."

Ecclesiastical titles have been perpetuated in such names as Bishop and Chaplain, or Chaplin.

Reminders of royalty are King, Duke, Prince, Lord, Earl, Knight and Noble.

The second large class of occupative names is made up of trade or craft names. To distinguish an individual from others, he was referred to as a person who followed a certain trade. For a long time, Smith has been the most common name in this country. It comes from the old English verb, "smitian," meaning to strike. This occupation of metal-working is one of the oldest known. For countless centuries men have been making articles from many different metals. In the fourth chapter of Genesis we find mention of an early smith. He was called Tubal-cain, a name which is said to mean "producer of weapons." He is described as being skilled as an artificer of brass and iron. Any of us today think of a smith as a blacksmith. But there have been - and are - goldsmiths, silversmiths, coppersmiths, and tinsmiths. These last-named workers are sometimes called "whitesmiths" as tin was considered a white metal, in contrast with iron, a black metal. The one-syllable word smith was finally used to refer to any man who followed the trade of metal-working. This accounts for the prevalence of that surname today.

While smiths wrought from metals, the word "wright" was used to refer to men who worked with wood or other non-metallic substance. A cartwright made and repaired carts, while a boatwright was a builder of boats. The modern names are sometimes spelled Cartright and Boat-right. Not so well known today is the name Brigwright, a bridge builder. Wainwright means wagon-maker.

Many trade or craft names end in "er" or "or." Cultivators of the soil became Gardeners, Farmers, or Tillers. Builders were Carpenters, Nailors, Sawyers, Masons, Thatchers. Workers with cloth were called Drapers or Taylors. Other workers were Millers, Coopers, Barbers, Dyers. Quite often we find some of these names ending in "ster." This was the feminine form. So Brewster referred to a woman who brewed either for her family or the neighbors. Laxter is the feminine form of Laker, and Webster denotes a woman who wove some kind of cloth. Men who went after game were Hunters. If they sought birds for food or for sport, they were Fowlers. If they employed a certain type of hawk in bringing down their quarry, they were Falconer. A butler was a bottle-maker or a bottle-keeper, while a spencer was one who took care of and dispensed the spence, or provisions from the larder. So from this source we have the two names Butler and Spencer, or Spenser. Not so well known is the name Flucker, which originally signified a dealer in feathers. Ambler came to us from Latin and French. One meaning that it formerly had was a person who rode an ambling horse, that is, one that moved with an easy, swaying pace. One of our well-known words is furbish, meaning to polish or to shine. Frobisher is the surname that has been derived from this source.

A somewhat smaller group of these names end in "man." A peddler naturally became a packman, and a man who used a bow and arrow became

a Bowman. The modern name Harman, or Harmon, came from the old English name hereman, meaning a man of war, or a soldier. Sometimes a farmer was called a Tillman.

On following pastoral occupations were often given names ending in "herd." Shepherd is the one most easily recognized. Others have been altered in pronunciation and in spelling. Bullard, for example, is derived from bull-herd, and Coddard, from goat-herd. Coltard is the modern form of colt-herd, and Coward is an adaptation of cow-herd.

A few names end in "ward," which indicated a person to whom some responsibility for watching or guarding was entrusted. In that sense these words have an official meaning. Woodward was a forest ward, or guardian. Hayward looked after a "hay," or a "haw," a small, inclosed space of some kind.

Battle and conquest have given us a number of names. Archery has already been mentioned as one prolific source. There are still other names that have not been mentioned, such as Archer, Bowyer (also spelled Boyer), and Stringer. The names Pike and Gunn were no doubt given to men who used these types of weapons. A soldier who carried a spear was of course called Spearman. A carrier was an older type of firearm, and after a time a fighting man who used this weapon was given Carrier as his surname.

Many other occupative names are found in modern times. Of course most people who bear them have no idea of their origin or history. Mr. Pottinger, for instance, probably does not know that one of his remote ancestors was a man who concocted soups. Like wise, Mr. Nashsmith may not know--and may not care if we should tell him--that his name means knife-maker. And, finally, do the Lorimers realize that the first person who bore this name was a craftsman who made bridles for horses?

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS

Index Prepared to Bulletin Materials of Tennessee Folklore Society

The committee which began work following the last annual meeting of the Tennessee Folklore Society on the preparation of an Index of materials which have appeared in previous issues of the "Bulletin" now report that their work is tentatively complete in a card file form. It is their plan to add currently to this file as subsequent issues appear.

This committee was under the supervision of Dr. Susan E. Riley, Professor of English, Peabody College, and Mrs. Frances Cheyney, Librarian at Peabody, and was composed of Miss Martha L. Johnston, Acting Circulation Librarian, Peabody, assisted by Miss Mary Elizabeth Cannon and Miss Clorene B. Lowery of Peabody. Much thanks is due this committee for this most excellent contribution to the efforts of the Society.

The Index will be kept presently in this card file form until more definite plans are made for its publication. Those presently desiring to consult the Index may have access to it in the office of Dr. Riley at Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee.

NOTE: Before this Bulletin goes to press it has further been determined that the Index will be printed as issue number 3 of Vol. XV and will be mailed to subscribers in lieu of the usual type of Bulletin. The Index issue will be forwarded through the mails shortly after the first of September. Additional copies of the Index may be secured at fifty cents per copy by sending your request to Dr. T. J. Farr, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, Tennessee.

Since the September issue of the Bulletin will not carry any news items pertaining to the Society, notices of the November annual meeting will be mailed directly after the program for the annual meeting has been completed. The 1949 meeting will be held in the new library on the campus of Tennessee Polytechnic Institute in Cookeville.

Wesleyan Host to Folk Groups

Tennessee Wesleyan College was host on the evening of April 29, to a group of North Carolina folk dancers under the supervision of Miss Kitty Cooper of Shelby, North Carolina. Their visit to the campus was for the purpose of teaching our groups the folk games and dances and in sharing an evening of this sort with members of our student body and faculty. Chaplain George Naff of Wesleyan was in charge of the occasion and assisted the group in teaching to the group certain of the folk games which he knows. The North Carolina group joined other delegations from their own state and from Tennessee in a Regional Folk Festival held in Knoxville on Saturday, April 30. A group of Tennessee Wesleyan students attended this festival.

National Conference on Folklore for Children

The first National Conference on American Folklore for Children will be held on the campus of Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana, as announced by the conference chairman, (Dr.) Elizabeth Pilant. The purpose of this conference, Dr. Pilant points out, is to launch a movement for the use of American folklore in our schools "rather than such traditional European legendary as may be out of keeping with America's history - past, present, and (we hope) future." Folklorists, writers and editors of children's books, reviewers of children's literature, social science teachers, teachers of children's books, and other interested persons are being invited.

Wishbone superstition Traced to 322 B.C.

People have been pulling wishbones apart in hopes of making their wish come true since 322 B.C., reports the Poultry and Egg National Board.

Over 2,000 years ago, the Etruscans, early Mediterranean peoples, believed that whoever broke the larger piece off the chicken's wishbone would have his wish, the board said.

The Romans, the board added, picked up the wishbone ceremony from the Etruscans and carried it to England during their conquest in 43 A.D.

By the time the Pilgrims brought the custom to America, it was 2,271 years old.

(U.P. News Item)

BOOK REVIEWS

Morrell, Martha McBride, Young Hickory: The Life and Times of President James K. Polk, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1949, \$4.50.

The interest which a number of folklorists will have in Young Hickory by Martha McBride Morrell is to be found perhaps as much in the legend of Andrew Jackson as in the story of James K. Polk himself. It is a story of brilliant leadership in a politically troubled era in the nation's development where to be sincerely frank and outspoken was to make one immediately susceptible to the vilest acrimony. But the bark which found James K. Polk a most able steersman was often guided by the wise counsel of Old Hickory where the cross-currents of political bickerings were most turbulent. Even the mantle of Andrew Jackson upon the shoulders of Martin Van Buren was not comforting to Polk who was seeking the vice-presidency in the face of denunciatory Whiggism until Jackson in 1844 indicated to Polk how he might ride the current of party strife in the National Convention until it had beaten itself out in foam and had himself come to the forefront as the dark horse nominee of the Democratic ticket. Jackson himself had begun to lose faith in the designs of Van Buren, John C. Calhoun, and certain of their henchmen.

James K. Polk was a power within his own rights. And his wife, Sarah Childress Polk, dignified her every relationship both to her husband and to the cause which he represented. Both of them always stood for political and social justice when to do so brought certain disfavor and misunderstanding. The "Peggy Eaton Affair", the currency question, Indian affairs, gag rule, states rights as opposed to the distribution of government surpluses, the extension of Federal territory, the Mexican war and the insubordination of military leaders - these and many other such matters made Polk one of the most disliked and misunderstood of our presidents. The election of a Whig governor, Lean Jimmy Jones, in Tennessee did not make the way easy since the influence of Henry Clay was definitely felt. Even Sam Houston, Jackson's warm friend, turned against Polk when the latter failed to grant a commission of lieutenant general to Houston so that he might succeed to the military leadership in the Mexican campaign.

Much of the misunderstanding regarding Polk might have been avoided had the historian-friend Bancroft written the life of Polk which he had once planned. Mrs. Morrell does much here toward clearing this misunderstanding through an intelligent and acute analysis of historical events. Polk was no easy foe; nor was he revengefully unforgiving. He respected the prestige and position of his bitterest rival. He worked hard when he believed the cause to be right. He would still work hard when he alone believed in the cause. When he retired from the presidency, he remarked with a glow of satisfaction, "I have not left one iota of unfinished business on my desk." And history belatedly now begins to redeem what seemed his errors in the light of one of the ablest and most honorable administrations this nation has known.

- E. G. R.

Ottley, Roi, Black Odyssey, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1948, \$3.50.

Black Odyssey by Roi Ottley is the story of the Negro in America. The author is a negro who faces facts courageously and without sectional prejudice even though he is quick to point out that both North

and South at different times have been derelict in meeting their responsibilities courageously. One contention which we do not quite follow, however, is the suggestion that the negroes at the time of their immigration are described as having largely those same qualities of leadership which they later, or now, possess.

The thesis of most treatises on this subject is the same as here, "one of blazing insurrections, riots, lynchings, and bitter hatreds" except that here the background of detail is filled in in a most interesting and unusual manner.

As slave labor became less profitable in the North, it became more profitable in the South due to the cotton gin, evincing a trend of irrepressible circumstances resulting in the War Between the States, the subsequent Reconstruction problems, and a chain of incidents since which political and economic pressures have not so much set but halted the pattern of progress toward cultural race evolution. Here again we might disagree with Mr. Ottley in adding that it may not have been so much in spite of hindrances but because of these very tangible interracial contacts that much progress has been made.

The author points to leaders such as Anthony Johnson, W. E. B. DuBois, Walter White, Joe Louis, Jackie Robinson, and Father Divine who have not only worked for race progress, but have more importantly inspired their following to do so. A delineated portrayal of the part the negro has taken in all our wars from the American Revolution to World War II is set forth as ample evidence of significant loyalties and of the democratic spirit. And he then adds that the loyalty of a former slave to his master after emancipation was due to friendship rather than to subservient habits of obedience.

Those interested in the conduct of anti-slavery organizations, the underground movement of runaway slaves, the economic efforts toward reconstruction and full emancipation, as well as the more recent efforts of the race to free itself socially, economically, and politically, will find here much food for thought. This book offers a challenge which cannot be ignored, for "it is the story of a race's long battle for equality in a democratic nation."

- E. G. R.

Clark, Thomas D., The Rural Press and the New South, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1948, \$2.00.

Not a great deal of formal learning, but an ability to read, to write, and to use a reasonable degree of horse sense characterized the general qualifications of the early, rural, weekly editor. Neither was a great deal of expensive equipment necessary nor even available. But the small newspaper of the South has not only reflected the life and opinion of the South but moulded it as well.

"Not only did the common man have an opportunity to find his name in the paper because he was getting married or because he had a six-pound daughter at his house, but it got into print for other reasons. His mules might run away, the lightning might strike his cow, his hen might lay an egg which looked like a baseball, or he might even get drunk and find his way to the lockup." Whatever concerned the people from triviality to tragedy was likewise the concern of the country editor. Small papers took their cues on controversial matters from a few of the Southern dailies.

Following the Civil War Southern papers became predominantly Democratic. These local papers became nationally aggressive in political presidential campaigns. They reflected not only the postwar political flavor of the South but mirrored as well the cultural level of the region.

Human interest stories, sensational happenings, regional folklore interest, nature's anomalies, crops and seasons, dramatic acts of animals, snake stories, ghost stories, tall tales, death and burial, love and elopement - these and others went the rounds of editorial repetition. Amorous stories of love gave Kentucky the eventual legend of being a state renowned for its "blue grass girls" and "beautiful women." Whether a socialite or a green bumpkin, the newly-wed was in for a tirade of expletives.

The country editor has been an effective force in setting the pattern for progress in the New South. Economic and political trends, a new national and southern economy, health, education, race problems, good roads, civic improvement, law enforcement, war, peace - all these have come in for their share of consideration by the Southern press. Said David F. Wallace of the McMinnville, Tennessee, New Era, "The country paper is the honest exponent of unbought opinion and is the only means by which Tennessee can today get unbiased and conscientious truth."

- E. G. R.

Pratt, Fletcher, Ordeal By Fire, William Sloane Associates, Inc., New York, 1948, \$5.00.

Students of social studies are well aware that a knowledge of history must be gained from a variety of sources if a well-rounded concept of truth is to be gained. Some of the more common approaches are political, economic, social, religious, etc. In Ordeal By Fire by Fletcher Pratt not only are these concepts most ably combined, but there is added a new ideological, or cause and effect, treatment which caused one historian to say: "This is the best one-volume history of the Civil War I've ever read."

Events are paraded as personalities in a style which is more than dramatic. The style has something of a zest and a freshness which quickly translates thought into action and personalities into mobile force. That a boycott on ideas sometimes proves more effective than a boycott on contraband goods is in evidence here. The surging preponderance and subservience of leadership often steps up or delays the impetus of military action. McClellan's stalling in the Peninsula Campaign is described in the following manner: "... McClellan was asked for military support, but as he was enjoying a controversy with the War Department - subject, why I have no artillery - he refused to budge." Lincoln was soon to observe, "I would hold General McClellan's horse for him if he would only win victories." But after Bull Run it looked for awhile like Washington might quickly be taken. Secretary of War Stanton raised many questions regarding executive authority.

The forts on the Cumberland and the Tennessee fell as Albert Sidney Johnston took his first lesson in strategy in dealing with the forces under the leadership of Grant. And then came that fateful Sunday morning at Shiloh where capable leadership was not allowed to lead. And then for the Confederacy there came malaria and no quinine. The Seven Days Battle before Richmond brought this observation: "McClellan saved his army thanks to several miracles, the crochets of Jackson, and the cannon built and manned by a race of mechanics." The South was now bitter and disgusted.

The war moved toward strategic points within the South - Vicksburg, Murfreesboro, Nashville, Chattanooga, Atlanta. Again successes and failures emerged largely as a study in personalities - the halting

decisions and incompetency of Bragg, the sturdy qualities of Thomas, the quick-hitting but restrained efforts of Forrest, and the jealousy among the high-ranking leadership of the Federals. The movements of armies through Tennessee and about Chattanooga offers much interest in a study of successes and failures in master strategy with subordinates like Thomas delivering the most telling punch of all. Then comes the issuance of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation as the emphasis of Union success is drawn to the Rappahannock again in endurance contests between Lee and Burnside and Hooker, and ultimately with Meade at Gettysburg. The spirit of the Confederate soldier was gone with his losses at Chattanooga. It remained only to drive the final wedge and take the railroad center of Atlanta. Most of Sherman's avowed vengeance was precluded by surrender before ashes were showered beyond Columbia. Then came the final meeting between Grant and Lee where the terms of ultimate surrender were effected. The ghost of that inspired Army of Virginia under Lee was now valorous even in defeat. In this Ordeal By Fire the "ordeal" was to perpetuate lasting memories after the "fire" was quenched.

- E. C. R.

Gosnell, H. Allen, Guns on the Western Waters, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1949, \$6.50.

In Guns on the Western Waters by H. Allen Gosnell, we have an expert and authoritative account of that phase of the Civil War so often passed over by regional historians. This is primarily the account of the gunboat warfare during the Civil War which craft ranged from the converted river steamers to the ironclads and rams later used as the war progressed. In the Campaigns of Red River, Vicksburg, and Forts Henry and Donelson this craft proved not only effective but highly destructive and strategically significant.

The graphic style in which Mr. Gosnell describes the many episodes in which these river gunboats figured, as well as the careful description of the construction and types of rivercraft, adds greatly to the interest and usefulness of this volume. The many drawings, photographs, illustrations, and maps add greatly to the vividness of these engagements.

Through the ability of the Federal forces to execute the early blockade of Atlantic ports and river mouths, the South from the start was thus deprived of the resources of its portages. After significant engagements of the Carolinas, followed the campaigns of the Gulf and the Mississippi. The Carondelet under Commander Walke played a prominent role in the battle of Fort Henry. The ironclad Pittsburg fought at Fort Donelson, Island no. 10, Yazoo River, Steele's Bayou, Grand Gulf, and Red River. The army rams at Memphis was "a wild and hotly contested malco under a pall of heavy smoke." The ironclads were slow and clumsy but mostly effective. The heavy-clad boats ultimately won. "The effort of the River Defense Fleet (Confederate) was glorious, but the failure was fatal and complete." The story of Vicksburg and the Arkansas is another of the sagas of the Civil War. There was also the blockade-running phase of the latter period of the war with its final suppression. Rivercraft became most significant to Grant in his efforts to move, supply, and feed an army about the time of the Chattanooga campaign while the Confederates were equally as determined in offering every possible deterrent.

The final phases of rivercraft strategy in the South were important. "The most important result of the opening of the Mississippi was in fact the closing of its entire length to Confederate traffic across it; this prevented supplies from reaching important eastern ports of the Confederacy from its great western areas." Portions of Civil War battlefields were strategically planned with reference to railroads, but quite as important still was the network of arterial support by means of waterways manned by the gunboats both North and South.

- E. G. R.

Spanish Books in Translation

Anyone interested in Latin American folk-lore will like to know about two books which have appeared recently in English: Onis, Harriet de (ed. and translator), The Golden Land, Knopf, N. Y., 1948. Toor, Frances, A Treasury of Mexican Folkways: the Customs, Myths, Folklore, Traditions, Beliefs, Fiestas, Dances and Songs of the Mexican People, Crown Publishers, N. Y., 1947, \$5.00.

New Richardson Books

A number of the readers of the Bulletin who read the last book of Mrs. Isla Pascall Richardson, My Heart Wakoth, will be interested in knowing that she has three other books due to come from the press in April, as this notice is being written. These are: Wind Among the Pines, a volume of poetry, Bruce Humphries, Inc., Boston; The Message, a play, Falmouth Publishing House, Portland, Maine; My Bod-Time Games, a book of juvenile verse and stories illustrated by the author, Story Book Press, Dallas Texas.

Richardson, Isla Paschal, The Message, Falmouth Publishing House, Portland, Maine, 1949, \$2.00.

The Message by Isla Paschal Richardson is the story of the resurrection of Christ. It is a dramatization of the story of the visit of the women to the tomb who also were the first to discover the truth of the resurrection. And of the three women, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary, it was Mary Magdalene who was first to sense the meaning of Christ's death and first to comprehend the significance of the resurrection. It was Mary Magdalene who first saw in the lily the symbol of truth which again and again was to light men not to the tomb but to the feet of a resurrected Redeemer. The empty tomb was first a stunning reality and then a hope which dawned as surely as the morning light. The three scenes of this one-act drama of the resurrection story move calmly but deliberately toward a symbolic questing for truth in which others, like the women at the tomb, feel a compulsion for spreading the tidings of the Easter story.

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President, Charles F. Bryan-Nashville, Peabody College
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Vice-President, Miss Mary Barnicle-Knoxville, University
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Treasurer, T. J. Farr-Cookeville, Tennessee Polytechnic
Institute
Secretary-Editor, E. G. Rogers-Athens, Tennessee Wesleyan
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